

Request for Proposals Establishment Grant

I. Introduction:

The Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) is announcing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for an Establishment Grant in the following counties: Bremer, Butler, Grundy, Marshall, Poweshiek and Hardin. This grant is for the establishment or expansion of a community rehabilitation program in the counties identified. The grantee must certify and provide evidence that:

1. the program is not replacing another program operated by the grantee in the counties identified; and
2. if staff is moved from an existing program within that agency to the new one in the counties listed, those staff are replaced in the program from which they came.

A. Program Description:

Since this RFP is designed to develop or expand the capacity of service delivery within the counties identified above, the individuals served by the grant must be clients who are eligible to receive services through IVRS, and are not on the waiting list. IVRS reviewed client service needs and identified gaps in services as well as a lack of informed client choice within the counties identified. Under the Rehabilitation Act as amended individuals who are eligible to participate in IVRS must be active and full partners in the rehabilitation process, making meaningful and informed decisions. The services needed in the counties are identified as follows and correspond to the Menu of Services:

1. Bremer County: Currently there isn't a service provider in Bremer County.
 - a. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching
 - b. Community Work Site Assessment
 - c. Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation
 - d. Work Adjustment Training in the Community
2. Butler County: Currently there isn't a service provider in Butler County.
 - a. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching
 - b. Community Work Site Assessment
 - c. Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation
 - d. Work Adjustment Training in the Community
3. Hardin County:
 - a. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching
 - b. Community Work Site Assessment
 - c. Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation
 - d. Work Adjustment Training in the Community
4. Grundy County:
 - a. Job Seeking Skills Training
 - b. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching.
5. Marshall County: Currently there is one service provider in Marshall County.
 - a. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching to provide informed client choice.
 - b. Community Work Site Assessment to provide informed client choice.

6. Poweshiek

- a. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching to provide informed client choice.
- b. Community Work Site Assessment to provide informed client choice.

7. Tama

- a. Supported /Selective Employment Job Development.
- b. Supported/Selective Job Coaching.
- c. Community Work Site Assessment to provide informed client choice.
- d. Work Adjustment Training in the Community.
- e. Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation.

The service needs identified above per county is simply a guide for potential applicants of this RFP. Services as described in the Menu of Services manual may be needed by specific clients and the provider awarded the grant(s) may anticipate these needs in the future. The successful candidate(s) will be expected to provide a minimum those services identified. The successful candidate(s) may submit a proposal for one county or multiple counties.

B. Conditions:

IVRS will follow a competitive selection process, which is a formal process established to compare provider qualifications, terms, conditions, prices of equal or similar services, and historical outcome data in order to determine the best candidate from whom to purchase services. The successful candidate will demonstrate quality of services, ability to meet performance measures, support from the Central Point of Coordination in the counties served, and a proven track record of providing quality follow along services that minimizes displacement of individuals with disabilities.

This competitive process allows individual community rehabilitation programs as well as a consortium of community rehabilitation programs (CRP) to apply for the grant. Applicants may apply for specific counties to serve, as well as multiple counties. A consortium applying to serve multiple counties must designate one community rehabilitation program to act as the fiscal agent, and all CRPs in the consortium must provide a letter of support for the fiscal agent in the proposal. Creative alignment of services and partnerships are encouraged in this RFP.

Employees of IVRS are not eligible to apply for this grant. An employee/employer relationship between the grantee and IVRS is NOT allowable. The grantee must certify that such a relationship does not exist.

1. Establishment, Development, or Expansion Allowances:

Applicants seeking to submit a proposal in response to this RFP should be aware that while the grant is administered to the successful applicant, authorizations for case services are issued simultaneously for services rendered under the Menu of Services. This granting and case service authorization process allows the successful applicant to develop program solvency and sustainability once the grant expires. Proposals may request compensation for staffing, if necessary, for the purpose of providing the vocational rehabilitation services identified by counties for a maximum period of four

years. The Federal financial participation available matching rate for the following levels of staffing costs per year is:

- a) 100 percent of staffing costs for the first year;
- b) 75 percent of staffing costs for the second year;
- c) 60 percent of staffing costs for the third year;
- d) 45 percent of staffing costs for the fourth year; and
- e) Other expenditures related to the establishment, development or expansion of a community rehabilitation program providing the services identified as necessary, but are not ongoing operating expenses of the program.

II. Proposal Requirements:

The purpose of this Establishment Grant is to develop community rehabilitation programming that will promote integration of people with disabilities into competitive employment for the purpose of providing vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals of IVRS who are not on the waiting list for a maximum of four years. The funds through this grant are to be used for initial and additional staffing of community rehabilitation programs and initial and additional equipment. Organizations applying must be private or public not-for-profit organizations that specialize in providing vocational services to individuals with disabilities. Proposals must submit certification and evidence that:

- 1. the program is not replacing another program operated by the grantee in the counties identified; and
- 2. if staff is moved from an existing program within that agency to the new one in the counties listed, those staff are replaced in the program from which they came.

Proposals that fail to demonstrate the above evidence will be determined as not having met the requirements of an establishment grant and, therefore, will not be considered in the bid process. Proposals may be submitted for all the counties listed or for specific counties the vendor decides to identify.

A. Eligible Applicants:

10 points possible

Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) providers are eligible to apply for this grant. CRPs that do not currently have a Menu of Services Agreement must also plan on obtaining an agreement with IVRS for the services to be rendered in this grant. Applicants that do not have the appropriate accreditation must provide evidence within six months of the start date of the grant of the organization's application for accreditation. CRPs that do not have the accreditation must comply with all IVRS Program Review expectations until accreditation is secured. IVRS Program Reviews require the applicant to meet quarterly with Charlie Levine, Assistant Bureau Chief, and apply the recommendations for improvement provided by Mr. Levine. Should an applicant fail to obtain appropriate accreditation within the first three years, the grant will be discontinued. Organizations that do not have the accreditation will receive 25% less compensation according to the Menu of Services until accreditation is obtained.

Initial awards will be made for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months. A staffing grant may be continued for a maximum of thirty-six (36) additional months.

Continuation will be based upon the availability of federal funds and the grantees performance on outcome measures and approved grant objectives.

B. Goals and Objectives:

25 points possible

Applicants must identify the goals and objectives that will be met in measurable terms. The outcome data per county identified above should be used as a baseline. Applicants should address not only outcomes but activities that will lead to a reduction in recidivism. The statewide average recidivism rate for a three year period prior to fiscal year 2003 was 50% in supported employment. Proposals that address creative measures and actions to try and curb this trend are encouraged. Goals and objectives must be written that address:

1. Outcomes expected per year.
2. Recidivism rate expected per county.
3. Service delivery plan per county (i.e. application process, staffing levels, response time to requests, timeframe to develop jobs, etc.)

C. Planned Activities:

25 points possible

Describe the planned activities that will enhance the CRP's ability to meet the stated goals and objectives as well as address the following:

1. Describe the plan to develop sustainability.
2. Explain why the grant is necessary to establish the services instead of simply providing the service through the Menu of Services agreement.
3. Describe the proposed population(s) to be served by the grant (i.e. chronic mentally ill, cognitively delayed, etc.)
4. Provide projections on local business and industry needs, local wages, and placement.
5. Certify that the matched dollars are non federal dollars.
6. Describe the proposed method of accessing funding channels.
7. Describe the proposed accountability and sustainability timeframes.
8. Provide evidence of support from the local Central Point of Coordination (CPC) manager and an agreement by the CPC to fund the long term follow up of participants.

D. Budget and Budget Narrative:

20 points

The allowable costs for this grant are salaries and benefits along with equipment that is necessary to establish the project. Indirect costs are not allowed under the terms of this grant as this is a direct service grant only. The budget must provide line item costs for each of the allowable costs noted, and the rate of match per year required by the project.

The Budget Narrative aligns with the budget and concisely describes the nature of the line item cost in the budget. Very simply it provides justification and a rationale for the line item requested.

E. Letters of Support:

20 points

Three letters of support must be submitted directly to IVRS, and not included in the packet of the proposal. The letters submitted must be from the following entities:

1. Central Point of Coordination supporting the use of the CPR and agreement to provide follow along. CPCs may submit more than one letter if supporting more than one CRP. CPCs from counties other than the ones represented in this RFP may submit a letter of recommendation that describes the quality of the follow along and follow up service received from the CRP submitting a response to this RFP.
2. Representative of Business and Industry attesting to the CRPs professional work with the business. This letter should describe the frequency of contact the CRP has provided in following up on issues.
3. Parent or Guardian of an individual served, or from the individual served expressing the quality of the service provided. This letter should describe the frequency of contact the CRP has provided in following up on issues.

F. Contract Period:

Starting September 1, 2005 and ending September 30, 2006. Renewable for three additional years, at the discretion of IVRS, based upon availability of Federal funds and outcomes.

III. Program Definitions:

- A. Competitive Selections: formal process to compare provider qualifications, in order to meet the objective of selecting the service provider that submits the best proposal.
- B. Community Rehabilitation Program: a rehabilitation program that is private or public not-for-profit that provides rehabilitation services to facilitate the employment of individuals with disabilities.
- C. Follow Along or Follow Up Services: Services paid by the county of origin or CRP and provided by the CRP through job coaching and natural supports to enhance the individual's ability to maintain employment.
- D. Formal Competition: a competitive selection process that employs a request for proposal and is authorized by applicable laws resulting in a service contract.
- E. Monitoring: Monitoring means any planned, ongoing, or periodic activity that measures and ensures contractor compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of a contract.
- F. Supported Employment Job Development and Job Coaching: Defined in the Menu of Services manual found on the IVRS website. Services facilitate the development of a job and the support on the job for an individual with a disability to obtain and maintain employment.

IV. Contracting Clauses:

A. Monitoring, Review and Payment: The purpose of monitoring is to assist the contractor in:

1. Complying with the terms and conditions of the contract and applicable laws and regulations.

2. Preventing non-compliance by identifying and resolving potential problems by providing constructive and timely feedback.
3. Making progress toward the expected results and outcomes.
4. Reducing fiscal or program risks as early as possible.
5. Determining a need for technical assistance.
6. Determining if the contract should continue.

The following summarizes the expectations and timeframes for monitoring:

1. The contractor will submit progress reports concerning the progress and contractor performance on the goals and objectives on a quarterly basis.
2. The contractor will submit invoices and billings on a monthly basis.
3. The contractor will participate in at least one on site contract review per year where the financial and programming performance is reviewed.
4. The contractor will follow recommendations cited by the review.
5. The contractor will keep the local Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff well informed of their performance on a monthly basis (updated summary reports of work with the clients served.)
6. The contractor will correct identified deficiencies or findings by the local and state level staff and submit progress reports to any such corrective action plan.

B. Contract Termination:

Either party may terminate the contract in whole or in part without the payment of any penalty by giving 30 days written notification. The contractor shall be entitled to compensation, upon submission of invoices and proof of claim for services rendered, for the proper time period up to and including the date of termination.

Termination may occur for a variety of reasons including lack of federal funds or nonappropriation of funds. Termination may also occur if the contractor fails to obtain and maintain the required accreditation for the contracted services. Termination may also occur due to material breach in on or more of the terms or conditions of the contract. The contract may also be terminated for failing to demonstrate adequate performance on the goals and measures or failing to rectify areas in need of improvement. The contractor is responsible for the payment of unemployment compensation to the contractor's employees, worker's compensation, and other applicable employee salary costs.

C. Purchasing Requirements:

The contractor agrees that any equipment purchased under this grant will do so as efficiently and effectively as possible and make every reasonable effort to insure that the commitment of public funds obtains the most value for the money spent. Competition for the purchase of equipment should be fair, open and objective. The contractor may use an informal process in which at least three prospective vendors of the equipment are identified and solicited for a bid. Documentation and justification for using the selected vendor must be submitted to the IVRS Contract Manager. Misappropriation or abuse of this process may result in the contractor reimbursing IVRS for the funds used in the purchase price.

D. Indemnification: The contractor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the State of Iowa and the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, its officers, employees, and agents appointed and elected and volunteers from any and all costs, expenses, losses, claims, damages, liabilities, settlements and judgments, including reasonable valued of the time spent by the Attorney General's Office, and the costs and expenses and reasonable attorneys' fees of other counsel required to defend the State of Iowa or IVRS related to or arising from: any breach of this contract, negligence, the contractor's performance, failure of the contractor to comply with the laws and provisions of the contract, failure by the contractor to complete all reports, payments and withholdings required, intellectual property rights, failure of the contractor to adhere to the confidentiality provisions of the contract.

E. Insurance: The contractor shall maintain in full force and effect with insurance companies licensed by the State of Iowa, at the contractor's expense, insurance coverings its work during the entire term of this contract and any renewals. The contractor's insurance shall, among other things, be occurrence based and shall insure against any loss or damage resulting from or related to the contractor's performance of the contract regardless of the filing date. The State of Iowa and IVRS shall be named as additional insured's on the policies so that IVRS is entitled to receive notice of cancellation. All equipment purchased with public funds under this establishment grant become the sole property of the State of Iowa and IVRS should the entire project terminate within 15 years of the ending date of this contract and renewal dates.

The type of insurance required:

The contractor will submit evidence of the insurance with corresponding amounts to the IVRS Contract Manager regarding the following types of insurance: General Liability, Automobile Liability, Excess Liability, Workers Compensation and Employer Liability, Property Damage, and Professional Liability

F. Independent Contractor: The status of the contractor shall be that of an independent contractor. The contractor, its employees, agents and any subcontractors performing under this contract are not employees or agents of the State of Iowa or any agency, division or department of the State. Neither the contractor nor its employees shall be considered employees of IVRS or the State of Iowa for federal or state tax purposes. IVRS will not withhold taxes on behalf of the contractor.

G. Waiting List: The contractor agrees to serve only those individuals with disabilities that the IVRS Rehabilitation Counselor has identified as eligible to actively receive services.

H. Compliance with the Law: The contractor, its employees, agents and subcontractors shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, 2/24/2005including without limitation, all laws applicable to the prevention of discrimination in employment and the use of targeted small businesses as vendors or suppliers. The contractor, its employees, agents and vendors will comply with all federal, state and local laws regarding business permits and licenses that may be required to carry out the work performed under this contract.

V. Proposal Process:

Date by when RFP's mailed to applicants:	April 29 th
Date by when proposals must be submitted to IVRS:	May 31 st
Date by when proposals will be reviewed by IVRS:	June 24 th
Date by when notification that the grant will be awarded	July 22 nd
Date by when contract is mailed to successful applicant(s)	August 12 th
Date of final contract approval by IVRS Administrator	August 30 th
Date when the grant begins	September 1 st

Grants operate under the federal fiscal year cycle. Three copies of the proposal must be submitted with the original proposal.

Proposals must be submitted to: Mr. Charlie Levine, Assistant Bureau Chief
Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
510 East 12th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

V. Standards for Review of Applications:

A review team will be comprised of IVRS staff, and if possible a representative of the Central Point of Coordination managers. Each proposal will be reviewed according to the established number of points possible, the quality of the proposal in addressing the areas, and the outcomes achieved historically. The scoring will be validated by an independent reviewer using case service outcome data. The successful candidate(s) will have a proven track record of providing the follow up and follow along services expected for supported employment and as described by the CPC submitting the letter of support.